

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2010**

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, August 24, 2010, with Commissioners Sharon D. Dillon, Ron Wesen, and Kenneth A. Dahlstedt present.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Dillon called the proceedings to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chair Dillon led the gallery in the salute to the flag.

III. AGENDA:

a) 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Planning and Development Services - Gary Christensen - Director:

1. Discussion: Envision Skagit 2060 General Project Update

Gary Christensen, Director, introduced Kirk Johnson, Senior Planner, Team Leader, to update the Board on the current status of this project.

The name Alternative Futures has been changed to Envision Skagit 2060 in order to clarify the project. Mr. Johnson stated that the Skagit Watershed is being incorporated in the plans.

Mr. Johnson discussed the project schedule for 2010 and 2011. He explained some of the difficulties which they have come across when you work with different municipalities that have different zoning and planning rules. He is looking forward to the Commissioners and Mayors meeting together and selecting the Citizens Committee. 29 applications were received. Mr. Johnson would like to appoint the members in September.

Mr. Johnson reported that Robert Lang Ph.D. would be speaking at the Lincoln Theatre regarding future growth and development in the northwest and that he does a lot of demographic work and is an advocate for high speed rail.

Commissioner Dahlstedt shared his hopes for the Envision Skagit 2060 Citizens Committee.

Commissioner Wesen looks forward to the Citizens Committee's recommendations for Skagit County and the cities. He thanked the 29 people who applied and understood that the Citizens Committee would have to be narrowed down to 12 people.

Mr. Christensen discussed the computer model being put together for this project. It is similar he said to the game SimCity.

Chair Dillon wanted to be sure that future population growth took into account commercial areas. She's looking forward to the planning commission and cities working together on this process.

Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 8:38 a.m.

2. Miscellaneous

Mr. Christensen stated that there were no miscellaneous items to discuss.

b) 9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Work Session with Skagit 911 Director - Dave Cooper:

1. Changes in the Amount of Local Excise Tax Imposed on the Use of Switched Access Lines, Radio Access Lines, and Interconnected Voice Over Internet Protocol Services Lines for Enhanced 911 Services

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 9:00 a.m.

Dave Cooper, Director of Skagit 911, was present with Deb Welch who briefed the Board on the history of advanced 911 systems in Washington. Mr. Cooper stated that the rates charged per phone call were set in 1987. Inflation, new technology, and service demands on dispatch centers have created the need for increased rates.

Ms. Welch explained some of the new technology that 911 Centers can or will be able to use: texts, video and photographs will be able to be accessed which are received from cell phones, and when calls get transferred from outside calling centers, the important phone and address location information can be transferred with the call.

Mr. Cooper stated that Washington State Legislation passed a bill which directs new revenue for counties. They proposed that counties increase the rate from 50 cents to 70 cents per line. The state will be increasing calls from 20 cents to 25 cents per line which funds the 911 database that Frontier Communications maintains.

The state bill was written in such a way that if Skagit County elected not to increase the rate from 50 cents to 70 cents per line then the county would not be eligible for other funding sources of up to \$300,000 per year. Mr. Cooper stated that in 2009, the 911 Center received 285,289 phone calls. Funding is needed in order to make sure that equipment and systems are maintained. One benefit of the new state bill would be the way funds are received by the Treasurer's Office. Money, time, and paperwork will be

saved with the updated process. If Skagit County does not implement the rate increase, 911 switching services will not work as well and the entire cost will fall to the county and cities. State funds will no longer be given.

The Commissioners all agreed that no one wants to raise taxes. However, if we do not move forward with the increase, the county would lose even more. 911 calls are critical in every community and the Commissioners are disappointed with the way the state passed the bill.

Commissioner Dahlstedt wanted to bring this forward to each of the cities to see what they would prefer and to request letters from the cities stating their support or opposition to the rate increase.

The Commissioners understood that a decision would need to be made by October 1, 2010. They would like a letter put together for each Mayor to give to their council. The cities will be to plan for this change in their budgets depending on what is ultimately decided.

Mr. Cooper stated he would draft a letter and request answers from the cities.

Dillon recessed the proceedings at 9.24 a.m.

c) 11:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Public Comment Period

A motion was made by Commissioner Wesen to approve Warrants numberd 325447 through 325511 from Clearing fund 696 in the amount of \$118,916.57. Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 11:30 a.m.

Vickie Young of Hobson Road in Bow, Washington, was present on behalf of Skagit County Homeless Coalition. She stated that Skagit County has a homeless population of almost 3,000 and that half of the population is under the age of 18. She wanted to invite the Commissioners to the Project Homeless Connect Event on September 1, 2010 located at Skagit Valley College. From 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. free services will be offered including haircuts, clothing, medical services, veteran services, and children's activities. She also requested that those interested to please volunteer and in order to do so they can call Skagit County Community Action Agency at 360-416-7585 and ask for the volunteer action center.

Commissioner Dahlstedt stated that many people do not realize how many homeless there are in our county who need help and services.

Ms. Young stated that per capita, Skagit County has more homeless individuals than Whatcom County and that, per capita, we rival Seattle's population.

Commissioner Wesen thanked Mr. Young for the information. The Commissioners would be attending some of the day's events at the college.

Chari Dillon also understood that SKAT bus transportation services would be free on September 1, 2010 in order to help people get to the college for these free services. She thanked SKAT for this service.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Dillon adjourned the proceedings at 11:41 a.m.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Sharon D. Dillon, Chair

Ron Wesen, Commissioner

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Linda Hammons, Clerk of the Board
Skagit County Board of Commissioners